

What is a Litter Control Officer?

Illegal dumping is a significant problem in some areas of Missouri. These illegal dumps can pose both environmental and health risks.

In the last few years, several counties have started programs to control illegal dumping that occurs on their back roads, rural farm lands and abandoned properties. They have done this by starting litter control officer (LCO) programs.

In the county where this program began, a single, devoted individual approached the county sheriff with a plan. The plan was that a deputized volunteer could identify, document and develop cases against illegal dumpers in the county. The result was a significant reduction in illegal dumping and the cleanup of many dump sites in the county. Since that time, several other counties have adopted similar programs and found them successful.

What can a Litter Control Officer do for your county?

For most county law enforcement offices, illegal dumping issues are low on the list of enforcement priorities. For this reason, one dedicated LCO can have a big impact.

The LCO becomes recognized in the county, and local citizens know they can call this person to report dump sites or vehicles they suspect may be involved in dumping.

LCO programs work best when a county has strong support from its prosecutor and local judges. The officers have full ticketing authority in the county because they are deputies of the sheriff's department. The LCO issues dumping citations that require dumpers to appear in court to answer to the violations. The LCO can cite dumpers for violations using local ordinances, State litter laws (Section 577.070 RSMo) or the Missouri Solid Waste Management Law (Sections 260.211 or 260.212 RSMo). Court costs and fines for those convicted of illegal dumping may be retained by the jurisdiction where the dumping occurred. Sentences may also include cleaning up their dump sites and others, as a community service.

What does it take to be a Litter Control Officer?

Being a LCO is not an easy task. It is a lot of responsibility and hard work. The person should either have a law enforcement background or be capable of getting the training needed to qualify as a county deputy. The duties may involve working odd hours to patrol during times when dumping may be occurring. The LCO may be a paid employee or a volunteer.

Portions of fines could help fund the program. In some counties, surplus county vehicles may be available for the officer's transportation needs.



The Missouri Department of Natural Resources supports the LCO Concept

The department supports the LCO concept for three reasons:

- It allows a county or district to be proactive in the cleanup and beautification of areas where dumping has occurred.
- More complaints and incidences of illegal dumping can be dealt with, further discouraging this illegal activity.
- It enables local officials to enforce against illegal dumpers more effectively and more quickly.

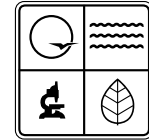


Do you want more information on the LCO program?

If you want your county to look into developing this program, contact the department's Environmental Assistance office or Solid Waste Management Program:

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Environmental Assistance office
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0176
Phone: (573) 526-6627, or
1-800-361-4827
Fax: (573) 526-5808
www.dnr.mo.gov/oac/

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Solid Waste Management Program
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176
Phone: (573) 751-5401, or
1-800-361-4827
Fax: (573) 526-3902
www.dnr.mo.gov/alpd/swmp



Missouri Department
of Natural Resources

County Litter Control Officer



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Solid Waste Management Program